



Teaching and Learning Links

Office of Instructional Promising Practices Division of Standards and Learning

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From the Director's Desk

Twenty-first century teaching and learning is a term that we seem to read or hear about daily. Its importance is highlighted by the fact that several education organizations and individuals have issued proposals or action plans for the President-elect to use as guides or resources in improving education.

For the last twenty years, our nation has developed various plans and proposals outlining what our students need to know and be able to do. For example, in 1992 the Secretary of Labor appointed a commission to determine the skills young people needed to be successful in the world of work. The report, the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) Report of 1992, still contains some valid recommendations.

In 1998 the School to Work program suggested that to be successful in the 21st Century students would need to be able to work in groups; to solve problems when answers are not self-evident; to use technology to communicate; to work collaboratively; and to understand how systems work. In 2002 the Partnership for 21st Century Skills proposed that students need information and media literacy skills and communication skills; thinking and problem-solving skills (critical thinking and systems thinking, problem identification, formulation and solution; creativity and intellectual curiosity); interpersonal and self-direction skills (interpersonal and collaborative skills; self-direction; accountability and adaptability; social responsibility); global awareness; financial, economic and business literacy, and developing entrepreneurial skills to enhance workplace productivity and career options; and civic literacy.

In his book, *The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need—And What We Can Do About It**, Harvard's Tony Wagner outlines seven "survival skills" he says students need before they leave K-12 education:

- Problem-solving and critical thinking
- Collaboration across networks and leading by influence;
- Agility and adaptability;
- Initiative and entrepreneurship;
- Effective written and oral communication;
- Accessing and analyzing information; and
- Curiosity and imagination.

All of these proposals and recommendations require that we implement new ways of teaching and our students develop new ways of learning. The Instructional Promising Practices staff is ready to work with you in developing and using new instructional strategies to ensure that all our students learn and master these new skills.

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*Wagner, Tony. (2008) *The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best School Don't Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need—And What We Can Do About It*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

South Carolina Reading First

"If nothing else, children should leave school with a sense that if they act, and act strategically, they can accomplish their goals. I call this feeling a sense of agency." (Johnston, p. 29*)

Approximately 110 literacy coaches, school interventionists, literacy coaching specialists, and intervention coaching specialists attended state study October 31, 2008. Dr. Peter Johnston, Professor of Education and Chair of the Reading Department of New York at Albany, author of *Choice Words*, presented. Johnston focused on comprehension and the importance of consistency in the language we, as educators, use with students to affect their literate lives. According to Johnston, if there is a disconnect in the language we use, the children we work with will be the ones that are left with confusion. This full day of professional development proved to be a challenging learning experience and provided many opportunities for interactions among participants.

Johnston will be a keynote speaker at the South Carolina Literacy Conference December 2008 in Charleston.

*Johnston, Peter. (2004) *Choice Words*. Portland, ME: Stenhouse Publishers.

The Classroom Assessment Scoring Tool (CLASS)

Early Childhood Coordinators from forty-one school districts across the state met in Columbia on October 28 for a business meeting and professional development. Coordinators received program updates and information regarding upcoming opportunities for professional development offered by the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). One goal for the central gathering was to offer coordinators the opportunity to share strategies for providing continued high quality services to students under current budgetary constraints. In addition to these items of business, Dr. Herman Knopf, Assistant Professor at the University of South Carolina, provided an overview of The Classroom Assessment Scoring System™ (CLASS™).

The CLASS is an assessment option for measuring the quality of interactions between teachers and students in the classroom. The CLASS provides a framework for observing key dimensions of classroom processes, such as emotional and instructional support, that contribute to quality of the classroom setting from preschool through third grade. Assessment of both the social interaction dimension of program quality and the physical classroom environment can provide a much richer and broader evaluation of the overall quality of early childhood programs.

In addition to measuring program quality, the systematic use of CLASS can provide administrators with valuable feedback in determining possible professional development needs of teachers. The instrument provides the opportunity to create a common measurement and vocabulary to describe critical aspects of quality across early childhood and elementary grades that have been considered somewhat difficult to characterize. These interactions are a critical aspect of promoting students' achievement and social competence.

For more information about The Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), including a review of research, please visit www.classobservation.com/index.php

Four South Carolina Elementary Schools Recognized for Exemplary Literacy Programs

Four South Carolina elementary schools have been recognized for exemplary literacy programs for primary-age children.

The Literacy Spot Award is sponsored by the South Carolina Reading Recovery® Advisory Council, the SCDE, and the Reading Recovery Training Center at Clemson University to recognize outstanding emergent literacy programs in primary schools in South Carolina. The schools recognized implement the Reading Recovery program for at-risk first-grade students.

Selected schools include **Nevitt Forest Elementary** in Anderson School District Five; **Alma Elementary** in Cherokee County School District; **Inman Elementary** in Spartanburg County School District One; and **Monarch Elementary** in Union County School District.

First developed in New Zealand, Reading Recovery is a program of one-on-one instruction for first graders who have difficulty learning to read. Students are served in daily thirty-minute sessions until they are able to read at the average level of their classmates. Part of the program is intensive ongoing training and professional development for teachers.

Winning schools will be recognized with an original watercolor print by local artist, Victoria Platt Ellis, at the South Carolina Literacy Conference which will be held in Charleston December 9-10, 2008.

2008–09 Best Practice Seminar Series



The next session in the Best Practice Seminar Series will be held January 7, 2009, at the Brookland Baptist Church Conference Center. Nell Duke will present on "Read Aloud and Guided Reading with Informational Texts."

To register, please go to the registration link at <https://elearning.ed.sc.gov>, click on the Catalog & Registration Tab. The catalog number for this session is OIPP 3003. Please print a copy of your completed registration **prior to submitting it**, as you will need it to make your payment. To pay, attach the registration form to a check made payable to SCIRA (\$75.00 per session) and send both to Judy Redman at Post Office Box 10101, Rock Hill, South Carolina 29731. No purchase orders will be accepted.

DISCUS Announces a New Partnership with Britannica

South Carolina institutions and agencies are experiencing budget reductions in these tough economic times, and DISCUS is no exception. In light of a \$346,000 reduction in funding, the DISCUS Database Assessment Committee and DISCUS staff met in late October to review license renewal options. We are pleased to announce that we have found a way to meet this reduction with a minimal loss of content. We believe that the committee recommended the best solution for South Carolina citizens.

As part of the solution, DISCUS is partnering with Britannica Digital Learning to offer a new suite of encyclopedia products for 2009. (We will be discontinuing the *Grolier Online* subscription.) We are very excited about this addition and think you will be also! The products include:

- *Britannica Online Elementary* - PreK – Grade 5
- *Compton's Encyclopedia* – Grades 6 - 8
- *Encyclopedia Britannica* – Grades 9 - 12

These following additional resources will provide new content for DISCUS. This content has been frequently requested by our users:

- *Britannica Learning Zone* – PreK – Grade 2
- *Enciclopedia Juvenil* - Spanish-language resources

The package provides these **special new features** for DISCUS:

- a dynamic multimedia collection,
- early childhood materials, and
- Spanish-language resources.

You are invited to explore these new Britannica resources before the January implementation. Contact your library media specialist or your district DISCUS contact person for the log-in information.

Unfortunately, as part of this budget process, DISCUS will be losing access to two South Carolina newspapers: *The State* and *The Greenville News*. However, our Gale resources and SIRS products will remain unchanged.

As always, the DISCUS program staff welcomes the opportunity to assist you in promoting the use of DISCUS resources to your students, faculty, and staff. We encourage you to check out both the [What's New](#) section of the DISCUS Web site to read about various summer updates and the [Toolkit](#) tab to find helpful handouts, brochures, and PowerPoint presentations.

Amy Duernberger, DISCUS Project Manager, SC State Library
(Aduernberger@statelibrary.sc.gov).

Summer Open Institute with Katie Wood Ray



Enhancing the Effectiveness of Writing Workshop

July 13-15, 2009, 8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Coastal Carolina University

The Coastal Area Writing Project extends an invitation to all South Carolina educators to attend our summer open institute with Katie Wood Ray. During this three-day workshop, Katie Wood Ray will focus on "Enhancing the Effectiveness of Writing Workshop." The registration fee is \$150 per participant. Space is limited and will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. For further information on this featured workshop, please contact Marcie Ellerbe at mkellerbe@verizon.net.

The skill of writing is to create a context in which other people can think.

Edwin Schlossberg

Professional Development, Grants, and Other Opportunities

The **Winter Literacy Conference**, sponsored by the College of Education at the University of South Carolina will be held on Saturday, February 9, 2009, 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. at Dutch Fork High School, Irmo, SC. Topics include reaching male

readers in the middle grades, learning literacy through inquiry, and finding the writer in every child. Registration information is available online at <http://www.ed.sc.edu/ite/langlit/conference/>. For more information contact Julie Niehaus, niehaus@mailbox.sc.edu.



Whole Language Umbrella

The **2009 Literacies for All Summer Institute** will be held in Columbia, July 9-12. The Whole Language Umbrella (WLU) is a small conference affiliated with the National Council of Teachers of English. Conference participants include classroom teachers, teacher educators, students enrolled in teacher education programs, and university literacy education faculty. This year's conference theme, ***Learning in the Company of Others: Reading, Writing, and Inquiring in the 21st Century***, invites participants to examine the ways in which we learn, exchange, consume, and produce texts in face-to-face and virtual mediums with known and unknown others. More information about the conference is available online at <http://www.ncte.org/profdev/conv/wlu>.

NASSP Annual Convention

Breaking Ranks: 2009 Secondary School Showcase

Thursday, February 26, 2009

This unique and highly informative professional development opportunity will feature school leaders, teachers, administrators, and STUDENTS from 18 of the nation's top secondary schools. Each 90-minute school presentation will focus on real stories of successful implementation of Breaking Ranks II^(TM) and Breaking Ranks in the Middle^(TM) techniques and strategies. Participants at this year's Showcase can expect to take part in informal discussions around relevant secondary school redesign topics such as increasing student personalization, transitions, project-based learning, professional learning communities, effective literacy programs, and more! Information about the Secondary School Showcase and the NASSP Conference, which will be in San Diego February 27 – March 1, is available online at <http://www.nasspconvention.org/>.

Now Debate This!

Now Debate This is a national scholarship competition (\$250,000 in scholarships) that challenges America's youth to creatively explore humanities and sciences by developing communications skills to challenge and inspire our society to resolve contemporary issues. Participants use debate, with its emphasis on research and analysis, combined with developing the skills of argument and persuasion, to explore and seek solutions to a question posed by Now Debate This.

The question this year is *Can the United States achieve energy independence?* Participants will explore and examine the lives and legacies of Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Alva Edison, John D. Rockefeller, Henry Ford, and Albert Einstein, who will each provide insight into the innovations, economics, foreign and domestic policy and the moral and ethical dilemmas presented then and now.

Teachers can apply for a teacher stipend of \$2500 to work with the students selected for the 2009 Now Debate This program. Additionally, Debate This Now is seeking adults to serve as judges.

All information is available online at <http://www.nowdebatethis.com/v2/>.

Write It Up

Teachers, share your favorite teaching tricks in a contest aimed at gathering best practices for teaching writing in the classroom. The contest, sponsored by [The Writing Teacher](#), [We Are Teachers](#), and LearningExpress [eFolio™](#) will reward the best ideas submitted by teachers as judged by their peers. Now through December 18, 2008, teachers who submit tips at <http://contest.thewritingteacher.org> and garner at least ten votes will win a copy of any book in the LearningExpress English Language Arts series. The top eight finalists will win a full classroom set of any single title in the series, and two winners who receive the most votes will each win a Flip Video camera.

School Library Media Services

Monthly Reading Calendars

The December monthly reading calendar is now available online at <http://reading-calendars.pbwiki.com> and at <http://ed.sc.gov/agency/Standards-and-Learning/Instructional-Promising-Practices/Library-Media-Services/index.html>. If you would like to receive the calendar each month as a direct email, please send an email to Martha Alewine (malewine@ed.sc.gov) with the following statement in the subject line: *Subscribe Monthly Reading Calendars*.



Plays, Musicals, and the Holidays: Avoid the Ghost of Copyright Present



This article by Barry Britt, Executive Producer and Director of Education for Soundzabound Music, includes some good advice as you begin or continue planning your student holiday productions. Fair Use Guidelines cover your use of copyrighted material for face-to-face instruction. For non-instructional uses, regardless of whether you are charging any kind of fees or admission, you will need to secure permission from all the copyright owners. Britt's article is available online at http://www.school-video-news.com/index_files/GridRules.htm. If you

have questions about copyright, Fair Use, and the need for permission, look no further than your library media specialist who is there to help you navigate the copyright maze. You may also contact Martha Alewine (malewine@ed.sc.gov).

Teaching Research through Collaboration

A Year-Long Inquiry Journey Merging National Information Literacy Standards with South Carolina Third Grade Language Arts, Social Studies, and Science Standards.

As we settle into the 21st Century, the importance of information literacy and “Learning 4 Life” for our K-12 students information on any given topic is available to our students in a myriad of formats: books, magazines and newspapers; websites, text messages, email; videos – movies, music and YouTube; digital billboards; photographs; television – cable, network and pay per view. These are some examples of the ubiquitous outlets for information that our students encounter daily. Our responsibility is to help them separate the wheat from the chaff, to become lifelong learners who can access, evaluate and use information, as they, in turn, create new information for others to access, use and evaluate.



One of the primary methods library media specialists use to teach information literacy skills is through instruction of the research process, which by definition, is a step-by-step procedure that examines information for authority and relevance. I have collaborated with many classroom teachers to teach students the research process within the context of a particular project in a specific subject area. This approach has provided relevant and effective tools for students to use when examining a singular topic in depth but the continued application of thoughtful examination and evaluation of information beyond the discrete assignment has been inconsistent at best. So, this year I decided to try a new approach to teaching the research process—designing and piloting a year-long inquiry project that would test the efficacy of consistent and repeated reinforcement of the research process on a thesis that integrates third-grade standards in Social Studies, Science, and Language Arts and national standards in information literacy. We are using *The Simple Four*, a research and problem-solving model created for South Carolina.

The inquiry journey started in October with one third-grade class and has since expanded to three third-grade classes and will continue through the end of the school year. The students in each class have been put in groups of two or three and have been assigned a specific research topic (e.g., describe the industries and resources of South Carolina and their importance to our economy and history, what was South Carolina’s role in the Civil War). Initially, the students are building a foundation by working through the steps of the research process and then they apply that knowledge to the gathering of information about their specific topic. The classes come to the media center approximately twice a month to learn about and effectively select and use print and electronic resources, to evaluate and organize their information, and eventually to present their findings through a variety of

media (e.g., podcasts, videos, Photo Story). The final step will be an assessment and reflection of their work and that of their peers.

Although we are less than a third of our way through this journey, the reviews have been great. One third grade teacher has said: "The project has been a great asset in the classroom. Since research is one of our standards, all the lessons have carried right into the research that we have already done this year." Another third grade teacher has seen how the lessons for the research process apply to other areas, "I'm working with students on strategies to help them improve their test-taking strategies. We use skimming and scanning to help locate key information that will help us answer specific questions. We also talk about how to highlight key words in questions and then locate those key words in the text to help answer the questions."

Our Inquiry Journey at White Knoll Elementary is just beginning, but all indications point to an instructive and challenging academic year.

Terri Catalano, Library Media Specialist
White Knoll Elementary School (Lexington County School District One).

An explanation of The Simple Four is available online at <http://icts-sc.pbwiki.com/The+Simple+Four>. For more information, contact Martha Alewine (malewine@ed.sc.gov).

Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence.

Helen Keller (1880-1968)



Happy Holidays!

**The Staff of
Instructional Promising Practices**

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide leadership, professional development, and technical assistance to the education community through the implementation of innovative practices that lead to student learning through standards-based instruction.

Programs, Projects, and Initiatives

To meet our mission, the Office of Instructional Promising Practices offers an array of programs designed to meet the needs of districts, schools, and teachers.

- Best Practice Seminars
- Bridges to Early Learning
- Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP)
- Early Childhood Education
- Exemplary Writing Project
- SC GEAR UP
- iCoaching Program (Science and Mathematics)
- Keeping Learning On Track* (classroom formative assessment pilot)
- Mathematics and Science Programs
- Reading Recovery
- Response to Intervention
- SC Algebra Project
- SC Coalition for Mathematics and Science
- SC Middle Level Literacy Institute
- SC Reading Initiative
- SC Reading First
- School Library Media Services (SLMS)
- Work Sampling

For additional information on these various programs, please visit our website <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Standards-and-Learning/Instructional-Promising-Practices>

For information on workshops, training sessions, and other professional development opportunities, please see our office calendar, available online at <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Standards-and-Learning/Instructional-Promising-Practice>